



OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY (SAP)

The federal government requires that colleges develop and enforce an internal system to monitor the academic progress of aid recipients. Additionally, the federal government mandates that aid recipients should be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate in order to maintain financial aid eligibility. These standards may be different than the academic standards to earn a degree or certificate, or to transfer to a 4 year college or university. Where differences exist, the standards set forth in this policy shall be used to determine eligibility for participation in student financial aid programs at Rio Hondo College.

The academic progress of aid applicants is reviewed at the end of every semester. Students who meet SAP standards as identified are maintaining satisfactory academic progress. Those students who do not meet the standards should refer to the following sections related to Financial Aid Probation, Termination (Ineligibility), and the Appeal Process. The standards apply to all financial aid students and to all coursework taken, including coursework taken prior to the time a student established financial aid eligibility.

Rio Hondo College’s satisfactory academic standards fall into three parts:

Part One: Unit Requirement

Federal regulations require that a student receive aid only for courses, which meet the student’s published declared program of study as published in the Rio Hondo College Catalog. This will be based on attempted units that are stated on your college academic transcript at all colleges previously enrolled/attended.

Completed units are enrolled units for which credit is received. Grades of A, B, C, D, or CR are considered units completed. Classes in which a student receives a grade of “F”, “I”, “NC”, “IP”, or “W” will not be counted as units completed for satisfactory academic progress purposes, but the units will be counted as attempted.

By the end of each semester, students must complete the minimum number of units required for their enrollment status, as indicated below:

<u>ENROLLMENT STATUS</u>	<u>UNITS ATTEMPTED</u>	<u>UNIT COMPLETION REQUIREMENT</u>
Full - Time	12 + units	12 units/semester
¾ - Time	9 - 11.5 units	9 units/semester
½ - Time	6 - 8.5 units	6 units/semester
Less than ½ time	.2 - 5.5 units	All units

Part Two: Grade Point Average Requirement

At the time of review, a student’s official cumulative grade point average (GPA) is evaluated to determine whether qualitative standards are being met. Student’s pursuing a course of study leading to an A.A degree, an A.S degree, a certificate, or transfer program to a 4-year college or university must maintain at least a **2.00** average.

Part Three: Maximum Time Frame Requirement

Federal Regulations allow students to receive financial aid for a limited time only. Students are required to complete their educational goal/degree as indicated below:

<u>EDUCATIONAL GOAL OBJECTIVE</u>	<u>ASSOCIATE DEGREE</u>	<u>TRANSFER</u>	<u>CERTIFICATE</u>
MAXIMUM UNITS ALLOWED	62 units	105 units	24 – 54 units

Maximum Time Frame is measured in units attempted. Grades of F, NC, (no credit), I (incomplete) or W (withdrawal) are considered attempted units and are included when calculating Maximum Time Frame.

Associate degrees require completion of a minimum of 62 units with a 2.0 GPA. Students enrolled in the Associate Degree programs must complete their goal by the time they have attempted 94 units. Students who reach the 62 units will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and a review of the education plan will be required every semester until student has completed the program. Any program that requires more than 62 units to complete (e.g., Nursing) will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Students enrolled in Transfer programs at Rio Hondo College must complete their goals by the time they have attempted 105 units. Students who reach the 105 units will be placed on Financial Aid probation and a review of the education plan will be required every semester until the student has completed the program.

Rio Hondo College offers a number of Certificate Programs, each requiring a specific number of units for completion. Students enrolled in Certificate programs must complete their goals by the time they have completed 150% of the number of units required for the specific requirement.

It is the student's responsibility to enroll in courses that count toward his or her educational goal. Students are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with a college counselor to have an Educational Plan prepared.

When determining satisfactory academic progress, a maximum of 30 units of remedial course work is allowable in addition to the maximum unit limit. All ESL units attempted are allowable and covered by financial aid.

On a case-by-case basis, a change of major will be taken into consideration. Students are permitted to change their educational objective one time only.

Other Provisions

The Office of Financial aid has the authority under federal regulations to place a student on probation or termination for future financial aid due to academic history indicating a pattern of inability or unwillingness to progress, such as continued or numerous withdrawals or enrollment inconsistent with the student's educational objective, for failing to meet reasonable academic progress standards. If grades are not yet posted, any financial aid award is tentative until the academic record is reviewed.

Students are responsible for keeping track of their academic situation that could result in probation or ineligibility status for financial aid. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of their status, submit an appeal and not rely on being notified by the Office of Financial Aid.

Repeat Courses

Financial assistance may be awarded to cover the cost of courses previously taken to improve a grade of D, F, W, NC, or I. However, repeated semester units will count toward the 62 unit maximum allowed. RHC pays for repeated courses one time only.

Financial Aid Probation

Students who fail to meet the three parts for maintaining satisfactory academic progress will be placed on automatic probationary period for a minimum of one academic semester during which they will maintain eligibility to receive further student financial aid. Students who are placed on financial aid probation will receive a Financial Aid Probation Contract which describes the standards that will be used in subsequent reviews to determine the student's eligibility for further federal financial aid. If a student fails to meet any of the requirements outlined above, the following actions will be taken:

- On the first non-consecutive occurrence, the student will be sent a Financial Aid Probation Contract informing the student they did not meet the satisfactory academic progress standards. In order to continue to receive student financial aid the following semester they must improve and meet the minimum requirements to avoid suspension. The contract must be signed and returned to Financial Aid agreeing to achieve the academic requirements by the end of the current semester.
- On the second consecutive occurrence (while on probation) the student will receive a Termination notice indicating they failed to meet the terms of the Financial Aid Probation Contract and therefore will not be eligible to receive further financial aid (federal or state, **with the exception of the BOGW**). Students whose aid eligibility is terminated may appeal for reinstatement after one academic year without financial aid after making progress. Student appeals will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Financial Aid Termination / Ineligibility

A student who does not meet the minimum standards as stated in this policy during their probationary semester will not be eligible to receive student financial aid at Rio Hondo College.

Any financial aid previously offered, awarded, or reserved for ineligible students will be withdrawn. Withdrawn aid is not necessarily recovered even if the student's aid eligibility is later reinstated. Rio Hondo College will use the reinstatement date to determine availability of funds.

Appeal Process

Appeals for re-establishing eligibility may be based on extenuating circumstances. Students must obtain, sign and complete a Rio Hondo College Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request Form. The forms must be submitted according to its instructions including all appropriate documentation. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee and The Director of Financial Aid will review requests and take one of the four specific actions:

- Approve reinstatement unconditionally, OR
- Approve reinstatement with specific conditions, OR
- Request that the student provide additional information, OR
- Deny the appeal

An Ineligible student may submit a SAP Appeal Request Form if the student believes there are Extenuating Circumstances surrounding his/her failure to maintain SAP. Examples of Extenuating Circumstances that must be supported by Official Documentation are:

- Death of an immediate family member
- Illness (Self, child or parent) where care was needed
- Major car accident

- Homelessness or eviction
- Victim of a crime or unexpected disaster

Submitting an Appeal with Official Documentation will be needed if your ineligibility is based on:

- GPA below 2.0 and/or
- Completion rate is below the minimum required units

If you are ineligible only because you have attempted 62 units or more, you will not need to submit Official Documentation. However, you will need to complete a statement indicating that you have attempted 62 units or more due to one or more of the following reasons:

- A one time change of major or goal
- Returning for a second goal
- Completing a number of ESL courses, Basic Skills courses
- High unit requirements for your transfer major (Math, Science, Engineering or Computer Science)

You will be notified in writing of the appeal decision within 15 working days. The decision of the Director is FINAL.

The Review Process

Applicants will be reviewed for SAP at the end of every semester when grades are posted. The College may conduct reviews on a case-by-case basis throughout the year. Students have the right to request a review. Requests should be submitted in writing to the Director of Financial Aid.

Questions and requests for information about this policy should be mailed to:

**Rio Hondo College Office of Financial Aid
3600 Workman Mill Road
Whittier, CA 90601
(562) 908 - 3411**